

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. None of the claims amendments add new matter.

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:
- a) a first framer;
 - b) a 2:1 multiplexer to receive an inbound signal from the first framer, the 2:1 multiplexer having a first input coupled to the first framer;
 - c) a first multiplexer to receive at least one signal from ~~another~~ a second framer, the 2:1 multiplexer having an input coupled to an output from the first multiplexer; and
 - d) a second multiplexer ~~that~~ to receives at least one signal from the second ~~another~~ framer, the second multiplexer having an output coupled to an input of the first framer for an outbound signal.
2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first framer is a SONET framer.
3. (original) The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the signal corresponds to an STS-1 signal.
4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first framer has n inbound signals and n outbound signals.
5. (original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein n is equal to 3.

6. (original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein n is equal to 12.
7. (original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein n is equal to 48.
8. (original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein n is equal to 192.
9. (~~Currently Amended~~) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first framer is an SDH framer.
10. (original) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the signal is an STS-1 signal.
11. (~~Currently Amended~~) A networking system having a first framer logic unit and a second framer logic unit, each of the framer logic units further comprising:
- AS
- a) a framer;
 - b) a 2:1 multiplexer to receive an inbound signal from the framer, the 2:1 multiplexer having a first input coupled to the first framer;
 - c) a first mutliplexer to receive at least one signal from the ~~other~~ second framer logic unit, the 2:1 multiplexer having an input coupled to an output from the first multiplexer; and
 - d) a second multiplexer to receive at least one signal from the ~~other~~ second framer logic unit, the second multiplexer having an output coupled to an input of the framer for an outbound signal.
12. (original) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the framer is a SONET framer.
13. (original) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the signal corresponds to an STS-1 signal.

14. (original) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the framer has n inbound signals and n outbound signals.

15. (original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein n is equal to 3.

16. (original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein n is equal to 12.

17. (original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein n is equal to 48.

18. (original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein n is equal to 192.

19. (original) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the framer is an SDH framer.

AS 20. (original) The apparatus of claim 19 wherein the signal is an STS-1 signal.

21. (original) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein each of the framer logic units corresponds to a line interface card.

22. (original) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the first and second framer logic units are coupled together through a backplane.

23. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
a 2:1 multiplexer receiving a first output signal from a first framer; and
changing the receiving of the first output signal selection of the 2:1 multiplexer
that receives the first output signal from a first framer and to a second output signal
from a second framer, the first output signal being the same as the second output
signal.

24. (original) The method of claim 23 wherein the changing occurs upon detection of a failure of a networking line, the networking line coupled to one of the first and second framers.

25. (original) The method of claim 24 wherein the second output signal from the second framer passes through a backplane within a networking system after presentation by the second framer and prior to reception by the 2:1 multiplexer.

26. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

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- a) a first framer;
 - b) a 2:1 multiplexer that receives an inbound signal from the first framer;
 - c) a first multiplexer that receives at least one signal from another a second framer, the 2:1 multiplexer having an input coupled to an output from the first multiplexer;
 - d) a second multiplexer that receives at least one signal from the another second framer, the second multiplexer having an output coupled to an input of the first framer for an outbound signal; and
 - e) a third multiplexer that receives at least one signal from the another second framer, the third multiplexer having an output coupled to a routing or switching engine that forwards packets received from the third multiplexer output onto another signal.
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24 27. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the first framer is a SONET framer.

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28. (original) The apparatus of claim ²⁴~~27~~ wherein the signal corresponds to an STS-1 signal.

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29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ²³~~26~~ wherein the first framer has n inbound signals and n outbound signals.

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30. (original) The apparatus of claim ²⁶~~29~~ wherein n is equal to 3.

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31. (original) The apparatus of claim ²⁴~~29~~ wherein n is equal to 12.

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32. (original) The apparatus of claim ²⁶~~29~~ wherein n is equal to 48.

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33. (original) The apparatus of claim ²⁶~~29~~ wherein n is equal to 192.

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34. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ²³~~26~~ wherein the first framer is an SDH framer.

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35. (original) The apparatus of claim ³¹~~34~~ wherein the signal is an STS-1 signal.

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COMMENTS

The enclosed is responsive to the Examiner's Office Action mailed on March 4, 2004. At the time the Examiner mailed the Office Action, claims 1-35 were pending. By way of the present response the Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 11, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 34. No claims have been added or deleted. As such, claims 1-35 are pending. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application and the allowance of all claims.

The Drawings

The Applicant has submitted replacement drawings for Figures 3 and 4 with modifications directed to the correction of mere matters of form. These changes have been shown in an annotated copy as well as a revised version of these figures. With respect to Figure 3, the Applicant has changed label 308c_x to 308c_n. With respect to Figure 4, the Applicant has: 1) changed label 400b to 400b_N; 2) changed label 402 to 402_N; 3) changed label 403 to 403_N; and, 4) changed label 400a to 400a_N. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections

35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1-35 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Further, the Examiner stated

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that claims 1-22 and 26-35 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for this decision.

The Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 11, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 34 to properly comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. These amendments have been instituted to these claims to better clarify their meaning so as to more closely conform to the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In light of these changes, the Applicant respectfully requests that all rejections made under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph be removed.

35 U.S.C. 102(e) Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 23-25 under 35-U.S.C.-102(e) as being anticipated by European Patent 0 620 694 A2 (hereinafter "Shiragaki").

The Applicant has modified independent claim 23 to more clearly express the meaning of the claim. As such, the Applicant does not believe that Shiragaki anticipates independent claim 23.

Examiner cites to col. 7, line 24-28 of Shiragaki as support for anticipating the multiplexer receiving of a second output signal from a second framer. According to Examiner, "control circuit 27 controls the links of the space division switch 10 and/or switch element 13 so that the switches are partially reconfigured and protection switching occurs from a faulty channel to a spare channel." See, Examiner's office action mailed 03/04/04, page 3-4. The Applicant respectfully disagrees that the above-cited material is the same. Based on Fig.2 and col. 7, line 24-28 of Shiragaki,

a wavelength-division multiplexer receives a second output signal, not from a second framer as claimed in claim 23, but from a space division switch (10, fig. 2) and/or a wavelength space switch (13, fig. 2). This clearly differs from claim 23, which recites the second output signal to come from a second framer and not a space division or wavelength space switch. As a result, Shiragaki does not anticipate independent claim 23 or its dependent claims.

In light of the comments above, the Applicant respectfully requests the allowance of all claims.

